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ABSTRACT

Information on the security operations of public four-year colleges and universities is examined, and the case of the University of Tennessee, Chattanooga (UTC), which saved $66,000 a year from the security unit's operational budget, is noted. Of 561 questionnaires sent to public institutions regarding the general operation of security units, including budget and personnel data, 300 responses were received. The majority of respondents (95 percent) did not contract with an outside agency for full-time campus security. To provide a clearer indication of typical security operations among campuses that have similar characteristics, further analysis was based on enrollment figures. The total enrollment was divided by the number of full-time officers in each institution. The findings indicate that some institutions have much larger security forces than others in the same enrollment range. Further comparisons were undertaken based on factors such as school location, campus size, and the size of department budget. No clear budget patterns appeared, regardless of the factors analyzed. A management study of its security force conducted by UTC resulted in streamlining security operations without sacrifice to the efficiency or service output. Recommendations for other institutions include the following: define the philosophy of the department and the campus boundaries; conduct a time study of all security activities; examine the hierarchical arrangement of campus police staffing to determine if positions such as lieutenant or detective are necessary; and assess the benefits of foot patrol as a deterrent to crime on campus. (SW)

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Hidden Costs of the Campus Security Force

by CHARLES M. TEMPLE

When scrutinizing fiscal operations for cost trimming, college and university administrators are sometimes guilty of overlooking the obvious. Faced with budget curtailments, despairing eyes are cast toward academic programs when a closer review of nonacademic areas could yield significant savings without the negative repercussions.

Opportunities to streamline costs and increase effectiveness and efficiency abound in most educational organizations. For instance, certain support units provide services to the college community on an ongoing basis. These services include activities such as physical plant maintenance, custodial operations, and campus security, which often grow as the institution grows without much thought given to cost effectiveness. Closely studying the fiscal health of support operations could yield real benefits.

In a conscious effort to reassess support units, administrators at the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga (UTC) examined the operation of the safety and security office. Surprisingly, an amount exceeding $56,000 a year was trimmed from security's operational budget with no sacrifice of efficiency or service output.

Most safety and security operations in colleges and universities receive little attention as long as no campus emergencies arise. This is understandable, since the student dissent of the 1960s is past, and strict campus security is not as necessary. Unfortunately, during this lull most administrators are not tailoring the scope and costs of security operations to current needs.

Charles M. Temple is executive vice chancellor of the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga.

Information has been gathered on the security operations of public four-year colleges and universities. A questionnaire seeking information on the general operation of each unit, including budget and personnel data, was sent to the director of campus security at 561 public institutions.

A total of 300, or 54 percent of the survey population, responded. The following summarizes typical responses to the questionnaire.

Survey Item	*Mean Response*
Number of full-time officers	19
Number of part-time officers	3
Campus acreage	703
Annual departmental budget	$361,798
Student enrollment	10,146
Salary for entry-level officer	$10,611

The majority of respondents (95 percent) did not contract with an outside agency for full-time campus security. The one qualification for entry-level police officers cited most frequently was a high school diploma. The vast majority of respondents indicated that benefits provided to officers included: medical/health insurance (92 percent); retirement plan (93 percent); paid vacation (96 percent); disability insurance (82 percent); tuition fee waiver on college courses (69 percent); and uniforms (92 percent). Thirty-four percent of the survey respondents indicated that a union represented their officers.

When asked to describe the neighborhood surrounding their campus, 80 percent of respondents indicated that the area was residential; 28 percent indicated that it was commercial/retail; 2 percent said the campus was surrounded by a manufacturing district; and 19 percent said the campus was rural. (The percentages above reflect multiple responses.)

Few Consistencies in Security Costs

These averages alone do little to convey the cost of the typical security operation and the variances found among campuses that have similar characteristics, so several factors were analyzed in more detail. This further analysis was based on enrollment figures taken from the 1978-79 issue of the *Education Directory* (published by the National Center for Education Statistics). Responding institutions for which enrollment figures or budget information could not be obtained were excluded from the analysis. Medical schools were excluded because their disproportionate number of security personnel tended to distort the data. As one respondent pointed out, state medical schools often treat prison inmates, necessitating the use of one security officer per prison patient.

The first step in comparing cost data was to compute the officer-student ratio for the responding institutions. To find this ratio, the total enrollment was divided by the number of full-time officers in each institution. Exhibit 1 summarizes these ratios by enrollment range. Additionally, the far right columns display the lowest and highest number of students per officer found in the given enrollment range.

The University of Tennessee At Chattanooga

Chattanooga, Tennessee 37402
Fall 1981 Enrollment: 8,000
Control: State
Highest Offering: Master's

As the numbers indicate, a considerable variance exists in the officer-student ratio both within an enrollment range and between enrollment ranges.

It appears that some institutions have much larger security forces than others in the same enrollment range. The officer-student ratio does not increase uniformly as the enrollment increases, as one might expect. Notably in the 15,000 to 29,999 range, the ratio dropped rather than increased. Because these variances could be caused by factors such as location, campus size, and size of department budget, further comparisons were undertaken using these variables.

For each respondent, the cost per officer was calculated by dividing the number of full-time officers into the proportion of the annual department budget spent on personnel. The average annual cost per officer for respondents who provided budget information was $14,020. Exhibit 2 shows a breakdown by enrollment range of the average cost per full-time officer.

As the exhibit indicates, no pattern emerged to connect cost per officer to enrollment range. Annual costs fluctuated widely among categories and did not rise uniformly as enrollment increased. When mean cost per officer was tabulated by annual department budget range, no discernible pattern emerged.

Exhibit 3 depicts budget range breakdowns. The size of the overall department budget did not automatically indicate costs per officer. In several instances a smaller budget had higher personnel costs than a larger one.

The size of the campus in acres was cross-tabulated with the average cost per officer. It is assumed that the larger the campus, the more officers are needed to patrol the area. However, a larger sized campus did not always require higher personnel costs and more officers, as can be seen in Exhibit 4. It is also possible that the location of a campus may influence personnel costs, as in the case of an urban campus located in the heart of a metropolitan area. However, when asked to describe the neighborhood surrounding their campuses, the majority of the survey respondents (83 percent) indicated that their campuses were in a residential area.

Variance in the percentages of student population living on campus may be a factor that contributes to the range of personnel costs examined in the exhibits. However, 80 percent of the respondents in all enrollment categories indicated that 50 percent or less of their student bodies lived on campus. When the percentage of students living on campus was cross-tabulated by budget ranges, only 39 (19 percent) of the respondents who answered this question indicated that the majority of their students lived on campus.

The fact that no clear budget patterns appeared in this study, regardless of the factors analyzed, was further emphasized when the total number of officers (full- plus part-time) was cross-tabulated with the annual budget ranges and the enrollment ranges. It is expected that institutions within the same enrollment and budget ranges would employ a roughly similar number of officers. Because the data from this cross-tabulation were too cumbersome to put in table format, a few examples were selected to summarize the results.

- The seven institutions with an annual budget of $25,001 to $50,000 and an enrollment of 1,500 to 2,499 each reported a different number of officers. The lowest number was two and the highest was 12.
- In the $100,001 to $200,000 budget category, the ten institutions in the 2,500 to 3,999 enrollment range reported five as the lowest number of officers and 13 as the highest.
- Those institutions with a reported annual budget of $1 million or more and those with an enrollment of 30,000 or more also showed wide variance in the total number of officers. The ten institutions in these categories reported officer totals ranging from 22 to 95.

This extensive spread between the highest and lowest number of officers in institutions that should show some similarities is by no means an isolated occurrence in this study. Unexplained variance in the number of officers employed and in operational costs seems to be the rule.

Examining Security Costs

The purpose of these comparisons is not to suggest that operational costs for campus security units should conform to a set standard or mean. The cost of an individual campus police force is a function of many factors such as enrollment, campus size, location, available budget, statutory restrictions, and even campus philosophy regarding security. The vari-

Exhibit 1: Average Number of Students Per Full-Time Officer by Enrollment Range

Enrollment Range	Number of Respondents in Range	Average Number of Students Per Officer	Average Number of Officers	Lowest Number of Students Per Officer	Highest Number of Students Per Officer
Less than 1,000	3	282	5	64	699
1,000 to 1,499	4	163	10	86	346
1,500 to 2,499	24	495	8	60	2,470
2,500 to 3,999	26	582	7	164	3,882
4,000 to 5,999	29	675	14	75	5,275
6,000 to 9,999	46	714	13	304	1,472
10,000 to 14,999	34	715	21	219	1,873
15,000 to 29,999	44	663	38	161	1,588
More than 30,000	13	781	55	336	1,677

Note: Data analyzes only those respondents who provided budget information.

Exhibit 2: Average Annual Personnel Cost Per Full-Time Officer by Enrollment Range

Enrollment Range	Number of Respondents in Range	Average Number of Officers	Average Annual Cost	Low Cost	High Cost
Less than 1,000	3	5	$ 8,202	$ 3,000	$11,429
1,000 to 1,499	4	10	$15,506	$12,284	$18,659
1,500 to 2,499	24	8	$16,974	$ 8,233	$20,688
2,500 to 3,999	26	7	$18,494	$ 1,095	$48,000
4,000 to 5,999	29	14	$14,224	$ 2,361	$25,140
6,000 to 9,999	46	13	$16,067	$ 1,446	$48,000
10,000 to 14,999	34	21	$17,658	$ 7,257	$30,000
15,000 to 29,999	44	38	$16,121	$ 4,250	$31,707
More than 30,000	13	55	$17,349	$ 6,944	$36,369

Note: Data analyzes only those respondents who provided budget information.

ances indicated in this study provide a basis for comparison and discussion for any institution conducting a close analysis of its security operation.

At UTC such an analysis produced cost savings. UTC has approximately 8,000 students and is located in a residential area near the central city. The current budget for the department of safety and security is in the $200,001 to $300,000 range; the department employs 19 security officers, with an annual cost per officer of $11,640.

These below-average personnel costs were not always the case. At the time UTC conducted a management study of its security force, there were 23 full-time officers. As a result of the study, the security staff was pared to its current level at a total savings of $66,000 per year. The current level has served the campus satisfactorily even with a continued 7 percent annual growth in enrollment that has almost doubled the size of the student body, the number of buildings, and campus acreage. The study produced a number of specific recommendations that may prove helpful to other institutions.

One of the first steps in any cost study of a security operation is to define clearly the philosophy of the department and the campus boundaries. Though seemingly unrelated, these are dependent on one another and seriously affect security costs. The philosophical orientation of the department will directly determine the jurisdiction boundaries for the campus. Many questionnaire respondents insisted that they were a "police" rather than a security force. If security officers view themselves more as general law enforcement officers than as campus security officers, they will be more likely to answer police calls not directly related to the campus. This orientation results in the extension of security patrols to peripheral areas, sometimes far from campus boundaries. Additional expenses will be incurred as both the number of personnel needed and the time spent on routine patrol will tend to increase.

The purpose of the security force is to protect the university community from crime. Ideally, security officers assume a supportive role in helping the campus become more aware of crime prevention. The security operation's first loyalty is to the goals and mission of the institution; it is not an appendage of the public law enforcement agency.

After a decision on departmental philosophy is made, the physical boundaries of the campus jurisdiction can be clearly identified. Security patrols should be confined to this designated area and extended only to directly related outside areas such as sorority or fraternity houses.

After campus boundaries are defined, a time study of all security activities should be conducted. Here, an outside consultant can help to establish a fair, objective method of recording and measuring activities. The close study of activities will frequently reveal unnecessary duplication of duties or overuse of officer time. At UTC it was found that fewer officers were needed during certain times of the day and certain days of the week and that the practice of sending out teams of two officers to patrol the campus was unwarranted. Clerical workload was reduced by eliminating the requirement that police reports be typed.

The hierarchical arrangement of campus police staffing should be examined to determine if positions such as lieutenant or detective are truly necessary. Higher ranking officers may not be needed to provide the same level of service to the campus community. At UTC the decision was made to allow regular city police to handle crime investigations; it was also decided that shift sergeants would be responsible for supervision of the security force.

Campus administrators should consider separating fine collection and parking violation administration from the regular security operation. At UTC the business office was found to be more efficient at handling fine collection, and parking violators are cited by parking enforcement personnel employed by the office. (Student personnel can also work in the area of parking enforcement.) Of course, UTC security officers are still empowered to write parking and moving violation tickets.

Foot patrol has been shown to be an effective deterrent to crime on the UTC campus. Security officers reassigned from motor patrol are more visible and accessible, and the number of patrol cars needed has decreased.

Any such departmental analysis may lead to elimination of some personnel positions. This can often be accomplished, however, through attrition, which is generally more rapid in the security area than in others.

It is important to note, finally, that streamlining security operations helps to lessen overall faculty resentment and anxiety by displaying administration willingness to trim nonacademic areas as well as academic ones. ♦

Exhibit 3: Average Annual Cost Per Full-Time Officer by Budget Range

Annual Departmental Budget Range	Number of Respondents in Range	Average Annual Cost Per Officer	Low Cost Per Officer	High Cost Per Officer
$25,000 or less	5	$ 8,673	$ 2,361	$19,000
$25,001 to $50,000	9	$ 8,810	$ 1,095	$16,000
$50,001 to $100,000	23	$12,009	$ 8,087	$20,688
$100,001 to $200,000	46	$14,599	$ 1,446	$28,800
$200,001 to $300,000	34	$15,436	$ 6,700	$48,000
$300,001 to $400,000	31	$21,009	$ 9,422	$48,000
$400,001 to $500,000	19	$16,300	$ 4,250	$31,058
$500,001 to $600,000	10	$23,808	$15,813	$45,815
$600,001 to $700,000	10	$17,638	$ 9,987	$30,000
$700,001 to $800,000	7	$18,192	$13,333	$30,000
$800,001 to $900,000	1	$19,013	—	—
$900,001 to $999,999	3	$18,939	$15,265	$22,625
$1 million or more	26	$19,221	$ 6,944	$36,364

Note: Data analyzes only those respondents who provided budget information.

Exhibit 4: Average Annual Cost Per Full-Time Officer by Acreage of Campus

Campus Acreage	Number of Respondents in Range	Average Number of Officers	Cost Per Officer
50 or less	18	21	$13,062
51 to 100	18	11	$16,206
101 to 250	61	14	$16,088
251 to 500	42	22	$16,739
501 to 750	25	20	$15,720
751 to 1,000	11	21	$13,350
1,001 to 3,000	25	37	$18,742
3,001 to 5,000	4	50	$15,843
5,001 to 8,000	5	31	$18,058

Note: Data analyzes only those respondents who provided budget information.

business officer

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